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MEMORIAL

OF

Mrs. Harriet T. Buckingham.

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OF

Mrs. Harriet T. Buckingham,

WHO DIED AT

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.,

October 22d, 1863.

"If ye loved me, ye would rejoice because I said, I go unto the Father.—*John xiv.* 28.

PRINTED FOR THE FAMILY.

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1864.

Harriet Taylor was the second daughter of Rev. Nathaniel W. Taylor, D. D., Dwight Professor of Didactic Theology in Yale College, and was born at New Haven, Ct., November 26th, 1814. She was married May 10th, 1837, to Rev. S. G. Buckingham, who was ordained and installed the same month, over the Second Congregational Church in Millbury, Mass. In the summer of 1847, her husband became the pastor of the South Church in Springfield, Mass., which was thenceforth her home, and where she died October 22, 1863, aged forty-eight.

Her remains rest in that beautiful cemetery at Springfield, and in the part known as Chapel Hill. And there, on the brow of the hill, as it slopes toward the north and west, under an old oak, where the morning sun falls unobstructed upon her grave, and where its setting rays struggle through the foliage to reach it, that precious dust sleeps, awaiting the sound of the last trumpet, when "this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality;" and then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory."

THE FUNERAL ADDRESS

BY

REV. S. W. S. DUTTON, D. D.,

OF

New Haven, Conn.

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ADDRESS.

This is a scene of sorrow, indeed, and also of peace and joy.

It is a scene of sorrow; for before us, robed for the grave, lies one dearer than his own soul to the pastor of this Church. Tenderly beloved by daughter and widowed mother, and brothers and sisters, and a wide circle of friends, and by an affectionate people, there she lies in death; and the places which have known her here will know her no more forever. And she is thus taken away in the midst of her days. There is the sense not only of bereavement but of disappointment. Her sun has gone down at noon.

Yet it is also an hour of satisfaction and joy; for we are here to celebrate the death of one for whom to die is gain, since for her to live was Christ—to love Christ, to serve Christ, to trust Christ. We celebrate the departure of one, for whom to depart is to be with Christ and the beloved saints who have gone before into the rest and joy of the Lord. We celebrate the release from almost life-long disease and suffering, of one who is now where "the inhabitant shall never say, I am sick," and where, in the attainment of perfect holiness, there is no need of the dis-

cipline wisely sent upon us here. And we are now to commit this body, so admired, beloved, and carefully tended, to the tender care of Christ, in a grave blessed by the presence of His own body; a grave whence it will come forth at the bidding of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life, in His own glorious likeness.

But under the first pressure of such an event, it is natural that its bereaving and sorrowful features should chiefly occupy our minds, and therefore it will be well on this occasion to turn our thoughts purposely to some of those consolations, which are abundantly and graciously afforded us.

That which occurs first to the righteous and devout mind, and may be sufficiently expressed in a single sentence, is this: God has done it; who doeth all things righteously and well, moving ever in love, even when surrounded by clouds and darkness; who doth not willingly afflict us, and pities us as a father pities his children. "The cup which my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?"

And then He who uttered that beautiful expression of submission to the Father's will, leaving us an example, our Lord and our brother, surely He bears our griefs and carries our sorrows. Oh, the heighth and depth and wealth of consolation there is in this! *Surely* He does this. God's word teaches it. Christian hearts in every age have experienced it. The evangelical prophet, in giving beforehand something of the history of Christ, declares expressly, that in all the afflictions of His people He was afflicted. This is sympathy in the strictest sense—entering into our sorrows and feeling them with us—sympathy as real and

hearty as is that of a circle of kindred, when they stand, whelmed in a common grief, by the bier of one of their beloved. The author of the epistle to the Hebrews, encouraging us to come to Christ as our Redeemer, declares that "He is not a High Priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities." With the *feeling* of our infirmities. That is, He feels them with us. He enters into our sorrows, and feels them with us. The sacred writer just quoted, and also the prophet Isaiah, plainly teaches that Christ encountered the discipline of sorrow for this very purpose, that He might sympathize with us in our sorrows. Why it was necessary that God, manifest in the flesh, should himself encounter grief and pass through a life of sorrow, in order to this sympathy with us in our sorrow, we are not, perhaps, able to say. It may be that thus only could human beings be made to understand and realize the truth that God sympathizes in their sorrows. We shrink, almost, from saying that it was necessary in order to give him a capability for this sympathy which otherwise he would not have possessed. And yet the apostle seems to say this very plainly in the passage already adduced, and also in this: "Wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto his brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest; for in that He himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted." But whether we do or do not venture to give the reason for the fact, which the apostle seems at least to give, the fact itself is plain, that Jesus Christ, the God-man, sympathises with us in our sorrows, and moreover that that sympathy is in some way closely connected with the truth that He was "a man of sorrows,

and acquainted with grief." With that sympathy, however, rather than with any question as to the way in which He is qualified for it, is our concern. *That sympathy is a reality.* It is shown in the record of His life. We see it as we read of his taking his mournful way with his disciples from Jerusalem to Bethany, when He knew that his friend Lazarus was dead; and how, when the bereaved sister fell down at his feet, saying, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here my brother had not died," He wept. Yes, "*Jesus wept!*" (I remember that when a child I used to wonder and be amazed at that *little* verse, composed of those two words standing by themselves, "Jesus wept." But as I came to understand something of the infinite sublimity and gracious bearing of their real sense, I no longer wondered, but thought them worthy of constituting a whole verse, even a whole volume, by themselves.) We see it, this sympathy, as we read of that widow of Nain, weeping behind the bier of her only son, and how He said to her in tones of compassion, "weep not," and then restored to her her all from the dead. We see it in all the recorded acts of His pity and tenderness toward the children of suffering and sorrow. And we know that the same heart which He had then He has now.

It is proved to be a reality also by the communications of his Spirit with his sorrowing people. As they draw nigh unto him in their griefs, he communes with their souls by his gracious spirit and gives them the assurance that he feels their sorrows with them. They know, by experience of these gracious communications, the truth of what the sacred poet has said.

"Our fellow sufferer yet retains
A fellow-feeling of our pains;
And still remembers, in the skies,
His tears, his agonies, and cries.

"In every pang that rends the heart,
The man of sorrows had a part;
He sympathizes with our grief,
And to the sufferer sends relief."

Now this is to have our sorrows borne indeed—to know that our Divine Redeemer, the King of heaven and earth, feels for us and with us. This surely will soothe the sorest wound of the spirit. This will bear us up under the weightiest burden of grief. This will light our path in the darkest night of bereavement.

Our Lord and our brother comforts us in our sorrows, also, by giving us support and consolation under them. This he imparts fully to those who rightly seek it. He is their refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. He does not despise the affliction of the afflicted, nor does he hide his face from them, but when they cry unto him he hears. He is to them a strength in their distress, a refuge from the storm, a shade in the heat. His rod and his staff comfort them. As the aged man in his infirmity leans upon his staff, so we may lean, when tottering under the burden of our sorrows, upon our Lord, and stay ourselves upon Him. And as the grieved child sobs himself into comfort in his mother's arms, so the bereaved and afflicted soul, casting itself into the arms of the compassionate Redeemer, there finds rest and comfort.

But the beloved one who has been taken from us—our thoughts turn in such an hour as this, with tender appreciation, to the consolation which is found in our memory

of God's grace in her, and our assurance that our loss is her infinite gain; a gain which flows back to us, and turns our loss into gain for us in proportion to our love to her.

Our friend had, by natural inheritance, fine mental qualities, united to a generous, genial, gentle disposition; and she was nurtured amid the choicest intellectual, social and Christian influences. Religion was early presented to her in its most truthful and most winning aspect, by parental teaching, parental authority, and parental example. She had unusual social advantages, in the society and friendship of the many eminent Christian persons, who frequented her father's house. Such powers and privileges, pervaded and vitalized by the renewing and sanctifying grace of God, resulted in a character of rare social and Christian loveliness. Always and everywhere, she was admired and beloved, and justly. Sensibility, rich, delicate, refined, freshness and simplicity of feeling and manner, and great wealth of kindness and affection, made her a charming companion to all who had the pleasure of her acquaintance, a dear delight to her intimate friends, especially to those within the circle of her family and kindred, and an earnest, humble and devout follower of Christ in the ways of piety and love.

Her distinctly religious life commenced in her youth. At the age of seventeen, during one of those outpourings of Divine Grace which visited New Haven and Yale College, she consecrated herself to Christ, and by profession of her faith united with the College Church, with which her father worshiped. This consecration, which was afterwards to ripen into all the fruits of her womanly piety, was marked at the first by all that decision and heartiness

which characterized her whenever she felt that she was right, or was engaged in a good cause.

It is interesting in this connection to recall a remarkable prophecy of an early Christian friend. Observing her name in her Common Place Book, he wrote after it, "Harriet Taylor, April 12th, 1831, a sinner just trusting in Christ! Perhaps a saint all purified, crowned, breathing the song of Moses and the Lamb with Paul and David, in April 1861." How nearly exact was the fulfillment!

To the peculiar duties that devolved on her as the wife of a minister of Christ, she gave herself with all the devotion which feebleness and disease allowed, teaching classes of young ladies in the precepts and doctrines of religion and in the duties of devotion, inviting Christian women to her house for counsel and prayer; and, though unable, especially of late years, to visit, yet always glad to see others at her dwelling, ever mindful of the poor and the sorrowing, and manifesting at all times that the cause of Christ was uppermost in her thoughts and heart.

From early life she had suffered almost constantly from disease and infirmity in some form. And only her most intimate acquaintances have known how *much* she suffered; for she always met her friends with a smile, though that smile often concealed extreme weakness or acute pain. Of late years, however, though she has been growing frailer, and more restricted in her freedom and in her intercourse with her friends, and has required more and more care to continue in life, she has suffered less acutely and been permitted to experience more of bodily comfort.

It is one tendency of such protracted disease, feebleness and suffering, and sometimes its result, to make a

person depressed, unhappy, irresolute, selfish, complaining. But the grace of God so accompanied this discipline in her case as to refine her character, making her more unselfish, patient, cheerful, loving, joyful in God and in her hopes for the future, until it seemed to her friends that, like her Lord, she was being "made perfect through suffering."

She had learned in this school of discipline the lesson of submission, and sweet submission, to her Father's will. She used to say with reference to her poor health: "We must have our discipline in some form, and I had as lief take it in this as in any other."

Notwithstanding this severe trial of disease and feebleness, in some measure perhaps by means of it through Divine Grace, it may be said, gratefully, that she has had a very happy life. She was happy in her childhood and youth, in her father's family, in which there was ever an atmosphere of Christian intelligence, peace, love and joy. And she has been especially happy in her married life—united by God's blessed ordinance to one who was exactly fitted both by nature and grace to be her life-companion, beholding in the opening and ripening character of their child the combined images of both parents, and above all having ever a warm sympathy with her husband, and giving him kind and beautiful assistance in their Lord's work of saving mercy and love.

It will not be an unseemly invasion upon the sacredness of her domestic life, if I give here some of her expressions during the last months and days of her life, as they have been communicated to me, illustrating the effect of her Heavenly Father's dealing with her.

She said at one time to her nearest friend, in regard to a subject that had greatly tried her, "I wish"—but checking herself immediately, she added, "No, I do not wish, I have had, but I no longer have, any *will of my own* about it. Whatever pleases my Heavenly Father, shall satisfy me." Early in her last sickness she said, "We have talked playfully about my living to be an old lady. But such dreams are all over now. And it is all well. We have needed this, or something worse, or we might have lost our souls."

Her enjoyment of every thing, and her gratitude for her comforts and for every slight alleviation of suffering, were never so great. Once as she lay upon her bed, too feeble, one would have thought, to take much interest in such things, she said she "had been admiring the little that she could see from her window—a little of the sky, a little foliage of the trees, the sunlight upon it, and the breeze swaying it gently; *and it was all so beautiful.*" After a distressing turn of coughing, when relief came, she said, "How thankful I am to my Heavenly Father! Nothing but thanks!"

Her faith in her Saviour, and her sweet and almost perfect confidence in Him, were delightful. "I expect," she said, "my dear husband, when I let go your hand to take hold of my Saviour's. I have been a poor sinner; but His blood is sufficient, and I trust in His promises. I may be mistaken, but I don't think I am. I am satisfied, perfectly satisfied."

She had no fear of death, but rather delightful anticipations of what must come after death. When told of one who was sick, and afraid to die, she asked, "Why should

she be afraid?" as if she could hardly understand how a Christian could be. She made her physician tell her, early in her last sickness, what to expect, and was neither surprised nor saddened by the probable result; and she made every arrangement with reference to it as carefully and calmly as if she was just going to housekeeping. And in speaking of her feelings she said, she had much of the time such peace and perfect submission to the divine will, that she was almost afraid it was the work of Satan to deceive her. Her husband said to her, that Satan did not make people submissive to God's will; that it must be grace, God's grace, such as He had promised to His saints. "Yes," she answered, "it was promised, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee.'"

Once, when she was partially asleep, they heard her say something about "a hat," "Father's hat," her mind evidently wandering back to the days of youth or childhood. Her sister said to her, "Father does not wear a *hat* now; he wears a *crown*." "Yes," she responded, awaking to the full consciousness of what she had said, and with one of her sweetest smiles, "*and so shall I*, very soon, if I am not mistaken." "And are you not sure," it was inquired. "Yes, very sure."

There is a beautiful coincidence, of which I am here reminded, between this reference of hers to the heavenly crown, and the half conscious words of her beloved and sainted father, in his last days. After his mind, through bodily weakness, began to wander, in a half unconscious way he frequently repeated the stanza,

> "See Salem's golden spires
> In beauteous prospect rise!
> And brighter crowns than mortals wear,
> Which sparkle through the skies!"

Late in the afternoon preceding her death, her throat had become so sore that it was extremely painful to speak; and she asked for pencil and paper, and wrote as follows: "You do not know how near death seems. I cannot talk. You must understand what I wish to say, though I know it is hard for you to do so. But I love you very much. I *love* you beyond all I can——" "Then you think," said some one, "that you are almost home?" She replied, "I hope so."

Among her papers, she left a letter to her daughter, in which, after giving her advice in respect to family matters, and pouring out her love as only a mother can, she says: "And now I want you to be all to your father that you can be. You must not give way to grief. God has much happiness in store for you in this world, I doubt not, and fain would I stay and share it, but the time will be short, and we shall enjoy all the more for all we have suffered here. I am ready to go; nay, I long to be with Christ, which is far better. Strive, dear Hattie, to honor and glorify that dear Saviour who has done so much for your mother. I can write no more."

What a legacy of love and piety for a child! an inheritance of itself.

In a note to her husband, she had left that delightful and impressive scene from the German of Theremin, entitled "The Awakening." It is the reunion of a husband to his wife, in heaven, who leads him to Him who is the joy of both their hearts, as well as the glory of heaven.

In the spirit indicated by these various expressions, our friend waited her Lord's coming; and on last Wednesday night He came and took her to himself, up to His heaven-

ly rest, so gently and tenderly that she seemed to be asleep in His arms. As her husband was watching with her, after requesting a change in her position, she fell asleep, and breathing more and more gently, in half an hour or so, before he could call any one, she had literally *slept in Jesus.*

"So fades a summer cloud away;
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er;
So gently shuts the eye of day;
So dies a wave along the shore.

"Triumphant smiles the victor's brow,
Fanned by some guardian angel's wing:
O grave! where is thy victory now,
And where, O death, is now thy sting!"

We remember, bereaved and beloved friends, that our Lord said to his disciples, "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said I go unto the Father." May we not hear the voice of our sainted friend, saying in like manner, "As ye love me, rejoice, because I have gone to the Father—into his immediate presence—into the glories and delights of the Beatific Vision."

To the Father! Into that Celestial and Beatific Vision all the faithful will soon go. And then the fellowship, which has now in a measure been sundered, will again be restored, and made pure as the light, and lasting as the days, of heaven.

If we are faithful! And how will the memory of her example help us to be faithful. Need I say a word to commend it to our hearts?—her example of faith, of patience, of submission, of humility, of love, of devotion. Let us be followers of her, as she followed Christ.

NOTICES OF MRS. BUCKINGHAM.

The following notices of her death may be of interest to her friends:

The Springfield Republican says,—"The death of Mrs. Buckingham, the wife of Rev. S. G. Buckingham, Pastor of the South Church, which occurred yesterday morning, was not wholly unexpected, but the affliction is none the less severe to her family, and their large number of sympathizing friends. Although for many years prevented by failing health from much intercourse outside of her own home, she has long been known as a woman of singular beauty and purity of character. The Conference of Churches assembled at the South Church, after being informed of her death, passed the following appropriate resolutions:

"'Whereas it has pleased the Great Head of the Church, during the session of this Conference, to call to himself the beloved wife of our brother S. G. Buckingham:

"'Resolved, That we, the members of the Hampden County Conference of Churches, do hereby express to our afflicted brother and his family, our deepest and most heartfelt sympathies.

"'Resolved, That we offer our united prayers to Him, who doeth all things well, that in this the hour of their great sorrow, they may be comforted by the consciousness of his love, and be enabled to submit with child-like confidence to his will.

"'Resolved, That while we so deeply mourn the loss, we render thanks to God for the bright Christian example, which He has given us in her unselfish life of patient suffering, and for the strong hope we are permitted to cherish, that she has but gone before us to our Father's house, and the General Assembly and Church of the First Born.'"

The Congregationalist, in its report of the Conference, says—"A sad and touching interest was given to the meeting of Thursday, by the death of the amiable and excellent wife of Rev. Mr. Buckingham, with whom the Conference was held. After a long period of patient and brave endurance, the invalid's chamber brightened by cheerfulness and faith, the suffering one sleeps at rest in Jesus. The bereavement of our brother, evoked a response of warm and affectionate sympathy."

The New York Evangelist says—"Rev. Mr. Buckingham—a brother of Gov. Buckingham of Connecticut—has been settled for many years in Springfield, and few pastors in Massachusetts are more generally known, or more respected and beloved. Ministers from all parts of the State and of the country, in passing through Springfield, have shared his hospitality, and all have carried away impressions of one of the most delightful of New England homes. Mrs. Buckingham, the daughter of a distinguished family, was highly educated, and to her natural intelligence and many accomplishments, were united a kindness of heart, a gentleness of manner, which made her loved by all who knew her. We do but express the feeling of many hearts, in tenderly sympathizing with the bereaved husband in his great loss. May the God of all consolation sustain him in this hour of sorrow."

One who had known her in her youth, and been a particular friend and classmate of her husband, writes—"My thoughts run back thirty years, to my remembrance of her, whose countenance I thought, (as I still think) one of the most beautiful that I had ever seen, and whom in my secret heart, I tenderly loved both for her sake and your own—Oh, can it be, that all that has vanished 'as a dream when one awaketh,' and that in no quiet retreat, charming like that, the delicious experience of those happy days is ever to be repeated on earth! How vividly at this moment, do I feel the vanity of the world, and how confidently do I feel assured of an immortality for the good, the beauty and blessedness of which, the brightest hopes of our youthful days do but dimly foreshadow.

"My thoughts run back twenty years, to the Pastor's home over which your Harriet gracefully presided, and in which she introduced me to mine. The interest which I had felt in her destiny, ten years before, was repaid to me an hundred fold, in delicate and kind offices,

which laid upon my heart a burden of gratitude which each year has deepened, and which I now long for the opportunity of expressing more fully in that better world to which her ransomed spirit has flown. In our memories here she now takes her place forever with 'the loved, the unforgotten.'"

Another, who had just returned from the war, where he had been in command of a regiment, writes—"When I was away at the war, and just as I was going into that very sharp battle of 'Irish Bend,' I heard of the death of my mother. A short time after, one of my staff officers, a pious, good man whom I loved, heard of the death of his wife, and we got together to talk over our sorrows. And he said: 'Why could I not have been spared this blow? Have I not left all for my country,—given up a very lucrative business,—come out into danger and hardship, all from the purest motives of patriotism, and at a great sacrifice, and could not the Lord have spared me this grief?' And for a time both of us rebelled, and while we rebelled we could not be comforted. But better thoughts prevailed, and when we came to God in a better spirit, he gave us relief and consolation.

"But what is all this to you, you will say. Why nothing, except that a word from one who has recently been, and now is in affliction, giving his experience in rebellion, and the great difference between a spirit of resistance, and a spirit of submission. I used once to think, that God's ways must be explained to me, or I would not submit. I must see the reason, or I would rebel. I think differently now. I have learned the military rule of obedience and unquestioning submission. My mother never allowed me to ask, 'why?' My military commander never permitted me to ask, 'why?' And Christ, who is, at once our 'Great Captain,' and our mother, and sister, and brother, has given us no permission to ask 'why?' We may not ask 'why,' now, but hereafter we shall see 'why.'

"That I loved you and your family when in Springfield, and since, you cannot doubt, if you give me the least credit for sincerity. Mrs. Buckingham was my most confidential adviser. I trusted and confided in her as my most true friend, and hers was always the advice of wisdom. She was an uncommonly shrewd observer, and at the same time she had none of the narrowness of mind which is usually the companion of shrewdness. And she was therefore eminently fitted to be the adopted sister of a young man in a strange city. Right gloriously

did she perform the duties and take the part of a sister. And to her advice and hints do I owe in a great measure, my success then and afterwards. She gave me the benefit of her experience in many a confidential talk, and she never erred. I feel that I have truly lost a friend, an adviser, a sister."

Still another, who had been one of her father's students, writes—"I saw, as did others, in Mrs. Buckingham many of the noblest traits of her father's character, and those who loved and revered him, could not fail to honor her for his sake. The Sabbath I spent at your house some years ago, was a 'feast of fat things' to me, for every unoccupied hour was taken up in conversation, in which the same strong and honest positiveness which was so charming in Dr. Taylor, and the same breadth of view, and especially the same magnanimity of sentiment, constantly came out. I was especially struck at the meeting of the Board, with her expressions of feeling. Though feeble in health, and plainly inadequate to the least exertion, there was no complaint or dread, but she wished she 'could have all her friends,'—she 'could not bear that any body should go to less comfortable quarters,'—she felt 'very strong,' and was sure she 'could do a great deal and not do too much.' It was refreshing to see how the willing spirit triumphed over the feeble flesh.

"And what a thought it is, that now that great soul has burst its bonds, and left its prison forever! 'No more fatigue,—no more distress.' What a meeting between the father and the daughter! To what glories will he lead her! What magnificent discoveries of truth will he unfold to her! To what companionship will he introduce her! You may remember to have heard him say, in his quaint way, that one of the first things he should do, after reaching heaven, would be to find Paul, and ask him what he meant by Romans 5: 12. He has doubtless found Paul, and many another, and has not only resurveyed with them the heights and depths of revealed truth, but has explored beyond, many a profound deep, and sublime height, over which he will tenderly guide his daughter's steps."

"How the beloved pass away!"—writes another who had been intimately acquainted with her and all her father's family. "Harriet Taylor, how lovely she was in her youth, in person, in temper, in character! How her father loved her and her mother! How her husband

loved her! How we all loved her! And now she has gone to put on all anew, to be young forever,—to be perfected among the loving and beloved.

"She has left a dear child—only let her be filled with joy and gratitude, that she was a daughter of Harriet Taylor. The dear husband,—how deep and how blessed is his sorrow, to have had such a flower to enjoy for his own in its bloom, and cherish when the blast was severe upon it. He knows too, full well the beauty in her that knew no fading. He will yet have all and more back again. Her mother knows that a child has gone from her, and what a child she will receive again. Only her, and those two sisters left,—but the circle is not broken, and the best part of it 'not seen' for a little while.

"Kindest thoughts all stirred up from their depths, for each and all of you, in which my wife is one with me."